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Information and communications technologies for development

Yemen:* draft resolution

Information and communications technologies for development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 56/183 of 21 December 2001, 57/238 of 20 December 2002, 57/270 B of 23 June 2003, 59/220 of 22 December 2004, 60/252 of 27 March 2006, 62/182 of 19 December 2007 and 63/202 of 19 December 2008, Economic and Social Council resolutions 2008/3 of 18 July 2008 and 2009/7 of 24 July 2009, its resolution 64/187 of 21 December 2009, and other relevant resolutions,

Taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution 2010/2 of 19 July 2010, on the assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,

Noting that cultural diversity is the common heritage of humankind and that the information society should be founded on and stimulate respect for cultural identity, cultural and linguistic diversity, traditions and religions, and foster dialogue among cultures and civilizations, and noting also that the promotion, affirmation and preservation of diverse cultural identities and languages as reflected in relevant agreed United Nations documents, including the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,[1] will further enrich the information society,

Recalling the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society at its first phase, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003,[2] as endorsed by the General Assembly,[3] and the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society adopted by the

* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China.

[1] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Thirty-first Session, Paris, 15 October-3 November 2001, vol. 1* and corrigendum, *Resolutions*, chap.V, resolution 25, annex I.

[2] See A/C.2/95/3, annex.

[3] See resolution 59/220.

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Summit at its second phase, held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005,[4] and endorsed by the General Assembly,[5]

Recalling also the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[6]

Recalling further the 2010 High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals and its outcome,[7]

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society outcomes at the regional and international levels,[8]

Taking note of the report of the Broadband Commission for Digital Development by the International Telecommunication Union and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,[9] which calls for broadband-friendly practice and policies towards attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, to ensure that the potential of broadband connectivity and content are at the service of development,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on enhanced cooperation on public policy issues pertaining to the Internet[10] and recognizing the need to also invite intergovernmental organizations from developing countries to participate in future consultations on this matter,

Recognizing that while in recent years considerable progress has been made in access to information communications technologies in some areas, including in cellular telephony, less than 18 per cent of the population in the developing countries uses the Internet, compared to over 60 per cent in developed countries,

Reaffirming the need to harness the potential of information and communications technologies to promote the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and sustainable economic growth,

Expressing concern that the current financial and economic crisis impacts negatively on the positive trends in information and communications technology diffusion and the investment needed in order to ensure universal access to information and communications technologies,

Stressing the need to reduce the digital divide including the imbalanced Internet international interconnection charges between developed and developing countries and to ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications technologies are available to all,

Recognizing further that the international management of the Internet should be multilateral, transparent and democratic, with the full involvement of

[4] See A/60/687.
[5] See resolution 60/252.
[6] See resolution 60/1.
[7] See resolution 65/1.
[8] A/65/64-E/2010/12.
[9] See www.broadbandcommission.org.
[10] E/2009/92.

Governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations, as stated in paragraph 29 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society,[4]

Recognizing the importance of the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum, as a multi-stakeholder dialogue to discuss various matters, including public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance, in order to foster the sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development of the Internet,

Emphasizing the significance and urgency of starting the process for enhanced cooperation in full consistency with the mandate provided in paragraph 71 of the Tunis Agenda[4] and the need for enhanced cooperation to enable Governments, on an equal footing, to carry out their roles and responsibilities in international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet, but not in the day-to-day technical and operational matters that do not impact on international public policy issues,

Taking note of the discussions at the fourth meeting of the Internet Governance Forum, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, from 15 to 18 November 2009, on the future of the Forum, which generally welcomed the renewal of its mandate and recognized the need for further discussion on the improvement of its working methods,

Welcoming the efforts undertaken by the host countries in organizing the first, second, third, fourth and fifth meetings of the Internet Governance Forum, held in Athens, Greece, in 2006, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2007, in Hyderabad, India, in 2008, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in 2009, and in Vilnius, Lithuania, in 2010, respectively,

Taking note of the note by the Secretary-General on the continuation of the Internet Governance Forum,[11]

Noting the importance of the Internet Governance Forum as a multi-stakeholder policy dialogue, as well as its role in building partnerships among different stakeholders so as to help in addressing the various issues of Internet governance, while reiterating the call for improvements of its working methods,

Welcoming, in view of the existing gaps in information and communications technologies infrastructure, the Connect Africa summits held in Kigali, Rwanda, in 2007 and in Cairo, Egypt, in 2008 and the Connect the Commonwealth of Independent States summit held in Minsk, Belarus, in 2009 and the meeting of Commonwealth countries in Colombo, Sri Lanka in 2010, which are regional initiatives aimed at mobilizing human, financial and technical resources to accelerate the implementation of the connectivity goals of the World Summit on the Information Society,

Recognizing the role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in assisting the Economic and Social Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up, in particular the review and assessment, of the progress made in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, while at the same time maintaining its original mandate on science and technology for development,

[11] A/65/78-E/2010/68.

Noting the contribution of the Global Alliance for Information and Communications Technologies and Development to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development,

Noting also the thirteenth session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, held in Geneva from 17 to 21 May 2010,

Recognizing the pivotal role of the United Nations system in promoting development, including with respect to enhancing access to information and communications technologies, inter alia, through partnerships with all relevant stakeholders,

1. *Recognizes* that information and communications technologies have the potential to provide new solutions to development challenges, particularly in the context of globalization, and can foster economic growth, competitiveness, access to information and knowledge, poverty eradication and social inclusion that will help to expedite the integration of all countries, especially developing countries, in particular least developed countries into the global economy;

2. *Expresses concern* regarding the widening gap in broadband connectivity between countries at different levels of development, which affects many economically and socially relevant applications in areas such as, inter alia, government, business, health and education, and further expresses concern with regard to the special challenges faced in the area of broadband connectivity by developing countries, including the least developed countries, the small islands developing States and landlocked developing countries;

3. *Stresses* the important role of Governments in the design of public policies and in the provision of public services responsive to national needs and priorities through, inter alia, the effective use of information and communications technologies to support national development efforts;

4. *Recognizes* that, in addition to financing by the public sector, financing of information and communications technologies infrastructure by the private sector has come to play an important role in many countries and that domestic financing is being augmented by North-South flows and South-South cooperation;

5. *Also recognizes* that information and communications technologies present new opportunities and challenges, and that there is a pressing need to address the major impediments that developing countries face in accessing the new technologies, such as insufficient resources, infrastructure, education, capacity, investment and connectivity and issues related to technology ownership, standards and flows, and in this regard calls upon all stakeholders to provide adequate resources, enhanced capacity-building and technology transfer, on mutually agreed terms, to developing countries, particularly the least developed countries;

6. *Further recognizes* the immense potential that information and communications technologies have in promoting the transfer of technologies in a wide spectrum of socio-economic activity;

7. *Recognizes* that South-South cooperation, particularly through triangular cooperation, can be a useful tool to promote the development of information and communications technologies;

8. *Encourages* strengthened and continuing cooperation between and among stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of the outcomes of the Geneva[12] and Tunis[13] phases of the World Summit on the Information Society, through, inter alia, the promotion of national, regional and international multi-stakeholder partnerships, including public-private partnerships, and the promotion of national and regional multi-stakeholder thematic platforms, in a joint effort and dialogue with developing and least developed countries, development partners and actors in the information and communications technologies sector;

9. *Welcomes* the efforts undertaken by Tunisia, host of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the International Telecommunication Union and other relevant international and regional organizations, for organizing annually the ICT 4 All Forum and technological exhibition as a platform within the framework of the follow-up to the Summit to promote a dynamic business environment for the information and communications technologies sector worldwide;

10. *Encourages* the United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, within their respective mandates, to contribute to the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, and emphasizes the need for resources in this regard;

11. *Notes* the organization of the World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2010 by the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to facilitate interaction among actors implementing the Summit's action lines;

12. *Recognizes* the urgent need to harness the potential of knowledge and technology, and in that regard encourages the United Nations development system to continue its effort to promote the use of information and communications technologies as a critical enabler of development and a catalyst for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

13. *Also recognizes* the role of the United Nations Group on the Information Society as an inter-agency mechanism of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination designed to coordinate United Nations implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society outcomes;

14. *Further recognizes* that the Internet governance related outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, namely the process towards enhanced cooperation and the convening of the Internet Governance Forum, are to be pursued by the Secretary-General through two distinct processes and recognizes that the two processes may be complementary to one another;

15. *Decides* to extend the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum for a further five years, and in this regard, invites the Secretary-General to continue with the convening of the Internet Governance Forum for a multi-stakeholder policy

[12] See footnote 2.

[13] See footnote 4.

dialogue on Internet governance issues according to its mandate as set out in paragraph 72 of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society,[13] while recognizing at the same time the need to improve it from many aspects with a view to linking it within the broader context of global governance of the Internet;

16. *Also decides* that the desirability of continuation of the Internet Governance Forum be considered again by Member States at the General Assembly within the context of a ten-year review of implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society in 2015;

17. *Stresses* the need for the Internet Governance Forum to improve its working and function, and to continue to improve its activities with a view to advancing, as referred to in paragraphs 73 and 78 of the Tunis Agenda,[14] increased openness, diversity, transparency, accountability and predictability, in order to accomplish its mandate as defined in paragraph 72 of the Tunis Agenda;[14]

18. *Invites* the Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to establish, in an open and inclusive manner, a working group which would seek, compile and review inputs from all Member States and all other stakeholders on improvements to the Internet Governance Forum, in line with the mandate set out in the Tunis Agenda,[14] and which would submit a report to the Commission at its fourteenth session, in 2011, with recommendations, as appropriate, that would constitute an input by the Commission to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council;

19. *Stresses* that the consideration of Internet Governance Forum improvements, with possible recommendations, should be sought, compiled and reviewed based on the inputs to be provided to the Working Group of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the elements of the report of the Secretary-General on the continuation of the Internet Governance Forum and the inputs of the various stakeholders participating in the Forum, drawing on the many concerns expressed during the session chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs at the fourth meeting of the Internet Governance Forum, held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt in November 2009, with particular consideration to the following aspects, inter alia:

(a) The representation and voices of the developing countries should be increased and the development issues should be placed as the first priority;

(b) The necessity to explore further voluntary options to financing the forum in order to enhance its functioning in a stable and transparent manner;

(c) The preparation process modalities of its work and the functioning of the secretariat should be improved, the provision in paragraph 78 of the Tunis Agenda[14] on establishing a cost-effective bureau to support the Internet Governance Forum should be implemented, and the balanced representation of all stakeholders and geographical regions should be ensured;

20. *Stresses* the need to enhance the participation of Governments and other stakeholders from developing countries, in particular from least developed countries in all Internet Governance Forum meetings;

[14] See footnote 4.

21. *Invites* Member States to support the participation of stakeholders from developing countries in the preparatory meetings of the Internet Governance Forum and in the Forum itself;

22. *Invites* the Secretary-General to convene open and inclusive consultations involving all Member States and all other stakeholders with a view to assisting the process towards enhanced cooperation in order to enable Governments on an equal footing to carry out their roles and responsibilities in respect of international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet, but not of the day-to-day technical and operational matters that do not impact upon those issues, through balanced participation of all stakeholders, especially developing countries, in their respective roles and responsibilities, as stated in paragraph 35 of the Tunis Agenda,[14] and requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly for consideration at its sixty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the outcome of these consultations;

23. *Recognizes* that the Internet critical resources are public resources that belong to all mankind, and all countries are equally entitled to the management and utilization of those resources;

24. *Stresses* that the United Nations should play a more important role in the field of "information and communications technology for development", continue to adhere to the principle of "multilateralism, democracy and transparency" for the governance of the Internet as endorsed by the World Summit on the Information Society;

25. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the status of the implementation of and follow-up to the present resolution, including on the work of the Internet Governance Forum;

26. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-sixth session the item entitled "Information and communications technologies for development".